

of the government but his own plan; however, one member of the Cabinet, whose name he could not recall, had asked him about the danger of possible rioting in the capital, and he answered that all necessary measures were being taken. Since no one objected, he interpreted the silence of the ministers as the confirmation of his plan and could consider it approved by the government.

By promising that the government would comply with Kornilov's program to reorganize the army, Savinkov persuaded the Supreme Commander to send the Third Cavalry Corps, reputedly one of the most dependable in his reserve, to Petrograd. It was agreed to keep the operation a secret. Officially the corps would be sent to reinforce the Northern Front for strategic reasons. Kornilov promised to inform Kerensky when the concentration of the corps around Petrograd had been completed. Kerensky would then proclaim martial law in the capital and begin energetic action. Probably he himself did not know what the action would be, but Kornilov's order to General Krymov, the commander of the Third Corps, was clear: Liquidate the Communists and the Soviets. In the language of both generals, that might have meant either shooting or hanging. The deal Kornilov and Savinkov thus concluded in Mogilev was, of course, a conspiracy against the Petrograd Soviet, which was then supporting the Provisional Government, but it is not clear whether or not Kerensky was informed of all the details of the plot.

Precautions were taken against attempts by railroad workers to stop the echelons as they had stopped the Tsar's train in March. A railroad engineering battalion with all necessary equipment was sent ahead of the corps. The expedition was organized carefully in every respect except that the generals had not asked the soldiers whether they would support them against the Soviets.

While the troops were en route from the Southern Front, a clash developed between Kornilov and Kerensky. The general summoned Kerensky and Savinkov to his headquarters as if he were already the ruler of the realm. Kerensky replied with an order to stop the movement of the Third Corps and removed Kornilov from his post. Kornilov refused to relinquish his command and repeated his order to the corps to proceed as instructed to the capital. Next, Kerensky issued an appeal to the people, telling his side of the story, and Kornilov did the same. If Kerensky's appeal was somewhat vague and puzzling, Kornilov's manifesto was absurd. "All in whose breasts beats a Russian heart, who trust in God, I call on you to rush to the altar and pray our Lord to show the miracle, greatest of all, by saving Russia!" In anticipation of the miracle, the general declared that he could no longer recognize the existing government. All the front commanders